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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

Lord God, this Nation places its trust in You. Your Divine Providence is most reliable; it is Your timing we find difficult to accept. Yesterday, poised for the launch of Discovery, Your people were ready to celebrate its climb to the heavens. But a technical indicator gave pause. The Nation stepped back while specialists reexamined their work.

We bless You and praise You for this revelation and the future safety and success it grants human efforts to explore the marvels of Your universe on another day.

Today, as the House of Representatives commits itself to the work of the people, may all be more sensitive to the art of timing. Grant Your servants patience with themselves and others until all helpful possibilities are explored and Your righteous will is agreed upon for the common good.

In You and with You the movement of lasting discovery is made now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from California (Mr. DOOLITTLE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. DOOLITTLE led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Monahan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 3071. An act to permit the individuals currently serving as Executive Director, Deputy Executive Directors, and General Counsel of the Office of Compliance to serve one additional term.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 1395. An act to amend the Controlled Substances Import and Export Act to provide authority for the Attorney General to authorize the export of controlled substances from the United States to another country for subsequent export from that country to a second country, if certain conditions and safeguards are satisfied.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 10 one-minute speeches on each side.

AMERICA'S STRONG ECONOMY

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the reality of the American economy in light of what all of the doom and gloomers have been saying. The facts are plain and simple: Our Nation is producing more, and our government is spending less.

The recent report from the Office of Management and Budget forecasts a decline in the Federal budget deficit. All along, House Republicans have had faith in the American people's ability to grow our economy and are looking to the future with confidence. It is our job in Congress to continue to hold the

line on spending to ensure the continued health of our economy.

The unemployment rate has fallen and is the lowest it has been since September 2001. Nearly 4 million new jobs were created in the last 2 years alone.

With sustained job growth, falling deficits, low interest rates and a booming housing market, America's economy is robust and getting even stronger.

Equally important are the numbers which show U.S. manufacturing continuing to expand. Durable goods orders are also on the rise. Consumer confidence is up with such spending accounting for nearly two-thirds of the economy.

The fact that I can stand here today and tout the success of America's economy can be attributed to the pro-growth agenda of the President and this Republican Congress.

SPARING FAMILIES THE ULTIMATE TRAGEDY

(Mr. KUCINICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, America has now lost 1,757 of our brave young men and women in Iraq. H.J. Res. 55, a bipartisan resolution, sets in motion a plan for U.S. withdrawal from Iraq and will spare more families of our troops the ultimate tragedy.

We should know, too, the suffering which this war has visited on the innocent people in Iraq. By some counts, over 100,000 innocent Iraqis have perished in a war that was based on a false premises. Yesterday, 18 Iraqi children were killed by a suicide bomber as the children reached for candy and toys from U.S. troops.

Each day, as new tragedies unfold, it becomes obvious that the presence of our brave U.S. troops will not end the murderous onslaught.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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We have done our best to secure the safety of the people of Iraq. Now we need to take steps to bring our troops home safely. We need to begin the end of the war in Iraq. Support House Joint Resolution 55 to bring our troops home.

BUDGET DEFICIT SHRINKS

(Mrs. BLACKBURN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I am holding up today's Washington Post. There is an article here, "Revenue Surge Shrinks the Deficit." Well, every day this week, I have come to the floor to talk about how tax reductions work and the growth that we are seeing in the economy.

Over the past 25 months, we have seen an average of 146,000 jobs created each month. We have near historic lows in unemployment. The GDP has been revised upward, and we are going to see a deficit that is about \$100 billion less than projected. It just goes to show, when you give about 92 million Americans a tax cut, good things happen. They keep more money in their pockets, and we see jobs growth, economic growth, and we also see the deficit shrink.

UPPER MISSISSIPPI NAVIGATIONAL LOCKS PROJECT

(Mr. BLUMENAUER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today, we begin debate on the Water Resources Development Act, a serious effort by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) to start fixing a seriously broken system with almost \$60 billion in construction backlog which includes projects which range from the good to the bad to the ugly and the obsolete.

Since the corps is overwhelmed with projects and labors under outmoded principles and guidelines which Congress and the corps have not updated in over 20 years, the process is inherently, intensely political.

The poster child for that is the upper Mississippi lock project, the most expensive navigation project in history, the dinosaur of these projects. An inspector general found that the Corps cooked the books and fired somebody trying to do his job telling the truth.

The Blumenauer-Flake amendment will provide a safety valve to ensure that the project will not go forward unless it is economically justified, and will speed the long overdue process of reforming the operation of the Army Corps of Engineers so it can be about the important water resources projects our country needs.

PERSONAL RETIREMENT ACCOUNTS

(Mr. DOOLITTLE asked and was given permission to address the House

for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Mr. Speaker, in crafting Social Security legislation, we must offer workers the ability to own a portion of their retirement through personal accounts.

President Roosevelt, the author of Social Security, was the first to suggest that, in order to provide for the country's retirement needs, Social Security would need to be supplemented by personal savings accounts. Personal accounts would allow workers to set aside part of their payroll taxes in a nest egg that the government cannot take away and that can be passed on to children and grandchildren.

As Americans, we can choose where we work and live, what we drive, which insurance plan is best for us, so why can we not give workers a choice when it comes to their retirement?

President Bush has said, "If you own something, you have a vital stake in the future of our country. The more ownership there is in America, the more vitality there is in America, and the more people have a vital stake in the future of this country."

Americans take pride in what they own. Establishing personal accounts within Social Security is an important part of encouraging an ownership society.

WOMEN SUFFRAGISTS DAY

(Ms. BERKLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be joined today on the House floor by two exceptional soon-to-be fourth graders from Southern Nevada, Hannah Low and Destiny Carroll.

These young women were inspired after reading about the women's suffrage movement and began a petition drive seeking to create a holiday honoring America's suffragists.

Hannah and Destiny presented this petition to me with hundreds of signatures that they obtained in my Las Vegas office. I am so proud of Hannah and Destiny, and I am honored to introduce a resolution to establish a day to commemorate America's suffragists. While it may seem unbelievable today, it was not very long ago that women were not able to vote in this country. I hope that by creating a holiday honoring the suffragists, we will keep alive the memory of the struggle to win this important right for women.

I thank Hannah and Destiny for serving as an inspiration for my resolution, and for being here on this very important day. I hope it is a moment that they will long remember, and I hope that they continue working to make a difference in their community and make a difference in our world and make it a better place to be.

□ 1015

TEACHER INCENTIVE FUND

(Mr. PRICE of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, Americans love their teachers, and they want to reward the best. For too long, teachers have been shackled by outdated performance systems that do not necessarily recognize effective teaching. Americans want to reward the best teachers for the work they do.

Yesterday, I introduced a new initiative, the Teacher Incentive Fund, to reward these hardworking educators. This innovative program will allow teachers to be compensated based on performance and accomplishments and how well they are helping students learn and achieve. These voluntary grants would provide incentives for States and local school districts to develop, implement, and maintain systems that reward teachers and principals who deliver on student achievement. The Teacher Incentive Fund will work to put the focus on the most important component in our education, and that is the children. Evidence shows that children achieve most when taught by high-quality teachers.

Most of us remember the teachers who affected us in a remarkable way. For me it was one of my high school teachers, Dr. Welch; and I will never forget how he challenged me to excel. Now let us reward those teachers who reside in every congressional district and challenge our children to excel every day.

WOMEN AND THE SUPREME COURT

(Mrs. MALONEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, Members on both sides of the aisle and Americans of all political persuasions are heaping praise on Sandra Day O'Connor for her distinguished service on the Supreme Court. Finding a fair-minded, evenhanded Justice to replace her, someone who will receive similar bipartisan accolades when all is said and done, should be our goal. And I know she is out there somewhere.

Will the President make it a priority to maintain women's representation on the Court at a paltry 22 percent? Or are we bound to a dismal 11 percent? We do not need a return to token representation.

In the President's campaign, he used the slogan, W is for women; but anyone familiar with his administration's record on equal pay, child care, reproductive freedom, and enforcing discrimination laws knows that W is for woeful on women's issues.

KARL ROVE

(Mr. HENSARLING asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)